

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-26 (Cancelled)

27. (New)

An optical connector (1) for establishing multimedia-connections in a motor vehicle, comprising:

a dielectric connector housing forming a receptacle for mating connection with a complementary connector, said receptacle of said dielectric housing being formed by sidewalls and a rear wall of said housing, said rear wall having openings in it,

at least an optical connection element including an optical fiber section in said connector housing, arranged in said receptacle, for mating connection with a complementary optical connection element of the complementary connector,

at least an electro-optical component including electronic circuits and being arranged on a rear side of said rear wall opposite to said receptacle, and

ESD protection means (30) comprising:

at least one discharge section projecting towards the receptacle and having a free end being exposed to the interior of the receptacle to provide an ESD protection within the receptacle, and

at least one electrically conductive discharge finger penetrating said rear wall through said opening and terminating in said discharge section, wherein said discharge section (34, 36, 38) is arranged in the vicinity of the optical

connection element, in such a way that the discharge finger forms a lightning arrester for protection of the optical connection element.

28. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 27, also including an U-shaped shielding clamp that has at least one discharge section having a front edge, wherein said at least one discharge section of said ESD protection means also has a front edge, all said front edges running flush in a lateral plane that is set back with regard to front sides of said optical fiber section.

29. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 27 wherein the ESD protection means comprises a plurality of discharge fingers with said discharge sections thereon.

30. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 29, wherein the free ends of the discharge sections extend essentially parallel to the introduction direction of the complementary connector.

31. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 30, wherein the receptacle includes a single cavity having, at a front side, an opening for introducing the complementary connector and, at said rear wall, a pair of optical connection elements.

32. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 31, wherein the ESD protection means has a first and a second discharge sections including first and second conductive fingers extending transversely with respect to the introduction direction of the complementary connector, and a third discharge section which is arranged between said pair of optical connection elements, and

wherein said conductive fingers are assigned to a pair of electro-optical components.

33. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 32, wherein the conductive fingers extend along a front side of the pair of electro-optical components.

34. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 32, wherein the conductive fingers are offset transversely with respect to the introduction direction.

35. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 34, wherein the first and second conductive fingers are formed asymmetrically.

36. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 31,
wherein the ESD protection means has discharge conductive fingers,
each having a discharge section,
wherein the first optical connection element of said pair is arranged
between a first and a third of the discharge sections,
wherein the second optical connection element of said pair is arranged
between a second and the third of the discharge sections, and
wherein the third discharge section is arranged between the first and
second optical connection elements of said pair.

37. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 36, wherein the receptacle has a cavity, the cavity has at a front side an opening for introducing the complementary connector, the cavity is bounded by said rear wall at a rear side opposite to the front side, and the rear wall has at least three openings through which the respective discharge sections extend.

38. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 36, wherein the discharge sections are stamped and formed from sheet metal at the ends of integral fingers.

39. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 27, wherein the ESD protection means has a dedicated connection element for connection to an electrical circuit board.

40. (New)

The optical connector according claim 27, wherein the connector has an external electrical shielding.

41. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 36, wherein the external electrical shielding penetrates the connector housing.

42. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 36, wherein the shielding is designed in the form of an essentially U-shaped clamp which engages around the connector housing rearwards.

43. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 38, wherein the ESD protection means is arranged essentially centrally in the U-shaped clamp.

44. (New)

The optical connector according to claim 38, wherein the clamp has integrally formed press-on lugs for biasing the electro-optical components against the rear wall of the housing in the introduction direction.

45. (New)

Use of a protection element with an optical connector designed for the MOST-standard, the optical connector having a receptacle in a connector housing for mating connection with a complementary connector and having optical connection elements which are positioned in said receptacle, wherein said protection element is provided in the region of the optical connection elements and comprises at least one discharge section for each optical connection element arranged in the vicinity thereof, each extending towards said receptacle, and having free ends being exposed to the interior of the receptacle, thereby preventing an electrostatic discharge from an object which is introduced into said receptacle onto said optical connection elements within said connector, wherein said protection element has electrically conductive fingers which penetrate said connector housing.